

# Commentary: Merry Christmas, and let's stand together in the New Year

By ACQUANETTA WARREN | Posted: Thursday, December 24, 2015 9:30 am

On Saturday, Dec. 19, the Fontana Fire and Police Departments in cooperation with Children Fund, Inc. held the "Heroes and Helpers" event at Target.

This event provides an opportunity for children to shop with our police and fire personnel.

As I looked around the room, I thought how blessed our community is to have such great first responders who work with sponsors such as Target and Milan Capital Management together to make such deserving families' dreams at Christmas come true.

Afterward, I stopped by the Fontana Unified School District, where volunteers were off to deliver presents to FUSD families in the community. I am overwhelmed by the generosity of the community of Fontana.

Then, at an event at Living Way Christian Fellowship, it was such an honor to join Assemblymember Cheryl Brown, Congresswoman Norma Torres, Community Services Commissioner Pastor Samuel Casey (New Life Community Church), Pastor David Zamora (Living Way Church), and Terrance Stone (Young Visionary) to provide 500 turkeys along with food necessary to make a holiday meal for every Fontana family in attendance.

Thank you to United Auto Workers for donating the turkeys and food. Another huge thank you to the United Steelworkers who provided more than 2,000 socks for all ages. The participants gave out backpacks and shoes, and Walmart donated money for toys and gift cards. Finally, Wells Fargo showed up to assist the financial future of the various community organizations serving this public. They put together a wonderful community of giving to our fellow residents of Fontana who need help to make their Christmas special.

I am grateful for the many heroes who assisted our efforts, such as Kim Carter from the Time for Change Foundation, and I must thank Pastor David Zamora, Terrance Stone, and Pastor Samuel Casey for keeping this event in Fontana and serving the needs of our community.



## Spreading Christmas joy

Volunteers from Living Way Church and the Young Visionaries helped coordinate an event in Fontana on Dec. 19 in which 1,000 toys and 500 turkeys were given out to local residents. It was one of several events in which local residents spread Christmas joy throughout the city.

----- EVERYWHERE you look, people were together regardless of their race, religion or party affiliation. It was all about giving and hope in Fontana.

The highlight of this season of hope was the Community Healing Program hosted by Water of Life Church, where various pastors of all different religions came together to show unity, love, and healing after the terrorist shooting in San Bernardino that left 14 of our own deceased, 22 injured and many with mental scars from witnessing or loss of love ones.

These days in December reminded me of a song by Carole King called "We are all in this together." This song teaches us that today and every day we must embrace each other because we are all in this together. We must be committed to collaboration where we work throughout the community to obtain quality education, job training, and social skills. Together with our faith based community and partnerships with our businesses and community organizations, we can build our future Fontana.

The holidays are always special and we all look forward to the New Year. It will be a new year to increase your commitment to helping and growing with each other because "We are all in this together" and no one person, group or issue can be successful if we don't stand together.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year Fontana!

(Acquanetta Warren is the mayor of Fontana.)